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## **2007 Made in Montana Marketplace a Success Sold Out Show & Record Setting Public Support**

(HELENA) – Two weeks ago Missoula entrepreneur Jennifer Salmi exhibited her signature “Montana Mud Shirts” at the Made in Montana Marketplace in Great Falls. Since then, her business has added six new whole sale accounts and sold about \$5,000 in new orders. Salmi says her experience as a first time Marketplace exhibitor was exceptional.

“My phone has been ringing off the hook and I still have two appointments to meet with additional buyers,” said Salmi. “I signed up as many retail buyers in one day in Great Falls, as I did in four days at other shows. This was a significant opportunity for exposure, and I now have accounts in new retail markets across the state.”

More than 100 Montana exhibitors showcased their products to 375 retail buyers and over 2,500 members of the public at the 2007 Made in Montana Marketplace. The 2007 numbers surpassed 2006 attendance by an additional 163 buyers and 466 individual shoppers.

“The Made in Montana Marketplace has a history of success, and the word has gotten around,” said Governor Brian Schweitzer. “Entrepreneurs know this show has the potential to catapult their products into main stream retail markets, and that’s why we have sold out shows every year.”

“This year the Montana Marketplace attracted buyers from local boutiques and mom and pop stores, to major retailers like Dillard’s and Wal-Mart,” said Commerce Director

Anthony Preite. “Networking between buyers and exhibitors can turn homemade ideas into profitable small businesses.”

The Montana Department of Commerce and the Montana Department of Agriculture started the original Made in Montana Food & Gift Show in 1998, however the previous administration cut funding for the show in 2004.

The Schweitzer Administration restored funding to help sponsor the rebirth of the show in 2005. In 2006, The City of Great Falls assumed production of the show and renamed it the Made in Montana Marketplace. The Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture remain chief sponsors of the Marketplace today.

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